

# Little Book of Verses

BY

Frank A. McGuire



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# LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES

BY

FRANK A. McGUIRE



JACKSON, MISSOURI

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1915

PS 3525  
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MOST of the verses in this book were printed in the year 1913 in a souvenir edition of fifty copies which I handed to some of my old school-mates and a few personal friends. Several parties have suggested that I issue another and larger edition in order to give the verses wider publicity. This I have concluded to do. The greater part of the collection were written in early youth and during the years immediately following the close of my school days. The reader, perhaps, will be able to identify these. Nothing was written with the expectation of its ever appearing within the pages of a book. The only motive I had in writing the verses was the pleasure I found in the effort. I do not flatter myself with the belief that anyone will derive much of either pleasure or profit from reading the book.

F. A. M.

Jackson, Mo., September, 1915.

TO THE MEMORY

OF MY BROTHER, ALBERT GAYLE MCGUIRE,  
DECEASED, WHOSE CHRISTIAN LIFE ITSELF  
WAS A BEAUTIFUL POEM, THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED.

F. A. M.



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### A GRAVE.

The warmth of the vernal sun,  
The wind from the south and the fresh'ning showers,  
As ever since the birth of the world they have done,  
Have wakened again the flowers.

Oh, would they could wake again  
One who sleeps where the shadows of the forest  
spread,  
It would free my poor heart of its grief and its pain  
Could they bring me back my dead.

Where, oh flowers fair,  
Are the hopes that were once such a comfort to me?  
They are gone, they have perished, are buried where  
I planted a wild rose tree.

O, wind from the southland, come,  
And go for a day and sigh with me  
By yonder grave where the flowers bloom  
And fade on the wild rose tree.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES. .

### THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

A universal hope o'erspread  
The waiting world, and overhead  
The conscious stars looked on  
The lowly place in Palestine  
Where Mary, favored virgin queen,  
Nourished her god-like son.

From star-lit Syrian skies above,  
From the presence of the God of Love,  
Burst upon the ears of men  
The melody of Heaven. Ne'er  
Before nor since did mortal ear  
Heavenly music ken.

Lo! the shining worlds above  
In wondrous convocation move,  
And send their brightest gem  
To honor Him and lead the way  
Of groping men to th' place where lay  
Their Lord in Bethlehem.

Far down the vista of the years,  
Forelooking, Israel's appointed seers

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

See the converging nations meet,  
Singing hosannas to the blest,  
Aweary, worn and seeking rest,  
Low at their Savior's feet.

The mountains know their Heaven-  
born King;  
The forests with His praises ring;  
All things with one accord—  
The earth, the air, the sea—make  
known  
Their faith in Him, and man alone  
Denies his promised Lord.

Heathen temples their gods forswear;  
The groves rebuke the altars there;  
Error hides its hideous mien;  
The darkening clouds at last are rent;  
Truth glows with light from Heaven  
sent,  
Brighter than the morning's sheen.

The demons of the darkness vast,  
That had plagued the earth for ages  
past,  
Were startled when the light  
Broke from the bending firmament,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And the brighter day that God had  
sent  
Triumphed over night.

## THE BROKEN HEART.

Toll the bell solemnly,  
For a woman is dead—  
Speak of her gently,  
And bow low the head.

In weakness she lived,  
Yet blameless she died;  
She suffered and sorrowed—  
In the furnace was tried.

In the fair days of youth,  
In her beauty and pride,  
She cherished a hope  
That was forever denied;

Yet she lived on and worshipped  
The idol she cherished,  
Till the burden of sorrow  
Broke her heart, and she perished,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Like a flower that blooms  
In the crystaline dawn  
Of a morning in spring  
Till its beauty is gone.

In her weakness she perished  
As a moth in the flame,  
While they spoke of her cruelly  
As a woman of shame.

Yet the fairest of all  
Of the angels, one day,  
Was sent down from Heaven  
To bear her away.

For the good God above  
Knew the wheat from the tare,  
And garnered the choicest  
Sheaf that was there.

And she died in the month  
When dark Winter's breath  
Is as cold as the pride  
That did her to death.

Ah! there's one who will wait  
Till the flowers rebloom

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And gather the choicest  
To lay on her tomb,

And tell to the dead  
Who is now resting well  
The love to the living  
He dared not tell.

## A SUMMER TWILIGHT.

The sun was down, yet tried its best  
To blaze and burn up, limb by limb,  
The trees out in the circling west  
That fringed the wide horizon's rim.

The crescent moon had come again,  
An acorn in a golden cap,  
And Night, approaching, dusky swain,  
Laid his head on Evening's lap.

The south-wind kissed the downy cheek  
Of precious beauty at my side;  
The frog-song floated from the creek  
Across the gloomy meadow wide.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

The lightning-bug lit now and then  
Its wondrous lamp out on the hill;  
Was heard from out the tangled fen  
The droll note of the whip-poor-will.

Beyond the field, in the distant wood,  
The hoot-owl answered to its mate;  
And in the air the beetle brood  
Began to boom and circulate.

Away off in the distance dim  
I heard the hound-dog's deep-mouth-  
ed bay;  
The cock upon the apple limb  
Crew good-bye to retiring day.

A gang of blackbirds hurried by,  
Belated, to their roosting place;  
I saw the slow-winged heron fly  
Across the evening's dusky face.

The leathern bat its home forsook,  
And, darting here and there, it flew;  
Dark-hidden in its leafy nook,  
The cat-bird sang a bar or two.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

In the tree above the zephyr sighed,  
A few big stars in heaven shone,  
And, somewhat like a hope that died,  
The day went out and night came on.

## SANTA CLAUS.

The last we heard of Santa Claus  
He was skipping o'er the snow,  
Away up in Alaska land  
Where dwell the Eskimo.

He was driving southward at a gait  
Fast as the eagle's flight.—  
Hang up your stockings, little folks,  
He'll be down here to-night.

But never mind, you children who  
Live where the scanty cup  
Of poverty is set, you need  
Not hang your stockings up.

Old Santa Claus is like the world,  
He passes poor folks by,  
He cracks his whip when he sees their  
homes,  
And makes his chariot fly.



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### NO DISTANT DAY.

They tell me that my lot, no distant day,  
    Will be to pass away  
On spirit wings to some strange world on high,  
Beyond the glittering stars that stud the sky.

Well, I don't know; but seems to me that I,  
    Somehow, would rather fly  
With wings the birds fly with, the birds that sing  
And make life's winter seem so much like spring.

They tell me that my body will be gone,  
    And that I will take on  
A form that can't be seen, intangible—  
My cup of joy will then be brimming full.

(Somehow I dread conditions so ideal,  
Divorcement from the things I know are real.)

It may be just because I'm weak and human,  
    Yes, weaker than a woman,  
That I sometimes think the Good Place would be  
    queer  
Without the forms and faces we see here.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

(Oh, may I there behold and recognize  
Some traces of old Earth in Paradise!)

Say, you who know, you wise men up in lore.  
When I reach that peaceful shore,  
There will I see the silvery rivulet,  
Lined with green trees and verdure thickly set?

The song-bird will I see, the forest wild,  
The sunset-temples piled  
Gold on gold, the morning sparkling bright,  
The rich array of stars above at night?

From out the east will shadows slowly creep,  
Wooing to restful sleep,  
When the day is done? Will the gentle South-Wind  
come  
And kiss the cheek of blushing May in bloom?

Will yellow fields in autumn greet me there  
In that better land so fair?  
There will I note the wild duck's distant flight  
Across the dusky heavens at fall of night?

And see the birds of passage circling high  
Up in the deep blue sky,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

As when a happy child I used to love  
To lie prostrate and watch their armies move?

Will pattering feet arrest the listening ear  
Of mother-love, and cheer  
Home-coming father's heart when they run to meet  
Him noon and evening, precious little feet?

And oh! above all else, tell me, you wise,  
If in that paradise  
She whom I love, my heart of hearts, will be,  
As she is here, Heaven's choicest gift to me?

## THE HOLY SPIRIT.

From worldly things my thoughts withdrew,  
And I lapsed into a reverie,  
Till soothing slumber came and threw  
Its opiate influence over me.

And as I drowsed and dreamed that night,  
And visions round about me whirled,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

A form there was that came bedight  
In the glory of a better world.

It stood with pearly hand aloft,  
And pointed where its home must be,  
And said in loving accents soft:  
"He calleth thee, He calleth thee."

"Who is it calls?" my soul replied;  
And again the voice spoke unto me:  
"The Savior who for sinners died,  
The stainless one of Calvary."

With calm indifference still I sate,  
The gentle pleader heeding not,  
All thoughtless of the bitter fate  
In store for me when I'm forgot.

Still, like a bird, whose joyful song  
Is changed to grief by some rude fate,  
About the hedge-row lingers long  
Where last it saw its stricken mate,

There by my soul the spirit stood,  
Till in despair it bowed its head  
And turned away, in pensive mood,  
And from my presence quickly sped.

# LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

## STANZAS

**Written on frightening two young doves from their nest.**

'(In the Brogue of the Scotch.)

Why frae your nest sae warm,  
Wee birdies, flutter you away?  
Hither that I might do you harm  
I didna stray.

I wot fu' weel how beat  
Wi' fear your hairts, as near your  
bower  
Th' intrusive wand'rer pressed his feet  
This luckless hour.

Frae yonder stibble borne,  
Your mither's cooing says: "Rest, rest,  
My bonnie bairns, I will return  
Soon to your nest."

Puir creature! if she kenned  
That sic mischance her bairns befell,  
The wae that wad her bosom rend  
Oh, wha could tell?

She'll hameward fly anon  
Wi' food to stech the helpless pair,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

An' when she sees that they are gone,  
She'll greet fu' sair.

Waefu' will be her cry,  
As aboon the empty nest she'll perch;  
Frae tree to tree how she will fly  
In anxious search!

If ruder chance should fa',  
An' vain her search frae tree to tree,  
If never mair they her ca',  
An' perished be,

Then, poised on some near  
bough,  
She'll crood, but to her sweetsnamair;  
Joy prompts her song na langer now,  
But mirk despair.

Oh, may na savage thing  
Come roond, nor tentless, wicked boy,  
To spy these birds o' timid wing,  
An' them destroy.

Thus, when we dinna heed,  
Oor actions aften times wander wrang,  
An' gie, by reekless word or deed,  
Some hairt a pang.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### LINES TO A TOAD.

Why, toady, should I pass you by,  
And never say a word?  
You can not sing, you can not fly—  
You're not a pretty bird.

In your rough skin that others loathe  
I something pleasing see;  
Unlike proud man's, it does not clothe  
Deceit and treachery.

That sparkle in my toady's eye  
Comes not at passion's call,  
But glances from the Love on high  
That shines alike for all.

Snug in your shady burrow there  
Beneath the "jimson-weed,"  
Unvexed by human toil and care,  
Uncircumscribed by creed,

I envy you your liberty,  
Content and peace of mind,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Free from the ills that e'er must be  
The lot of human kind.

When Night camps where retreating  
Day  
With shining banners stood,  
You'll sally forth on your foray  
Against the insect brood;

But I, alas! with tired brain,  
By care and toil oppressed,  
Upon my bed will seek in vain  
A night of perfect rest.

### ON THE DEATH OF A LITTLE CHILD.

The little bark had just begun  
To sail a sea storm-tossed,  
And, likely, further had it run,  
The venturer were lost.

Kind Providence took careful note  
What might, perhaps, have been  
The fate of that frail little boat,  
And quickly drew it in.



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### TO A MOCKING-BIRD.

Bird of the varying note,  
That from yon spreading elm-tree's topmost spray  
Now sends o'er trees and fields your song afloat  
To greet the new-born day,

Without your gifted tongue  
To lead the choir of nature's feathered host,  
Full half the music of the wondrous song  
To my rapt ear were lost.

This day of life and bloom,  
And beauteous light, methinks, would weary be  
Did not those mimic tones of gladness come  
To soothe and comfort me.

Oft your society,  
Sweet chorister, I seek, when ill at ease,  
And cares disturb, to hear your melody  
Borne on the trembling breeze.

Not only when the sun  
Begins to gild the trees and hills remote,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Or in the full-grown day, or twilight dun,  
Your cheering songs I note,

But often in the night,  
When sleep I vainly woo, upon my ear  
Your changing carols fall as clear and bright  
As now your song I hear.

When life was in its spring,  
My heart like yours, sweet bird, was light and gay;  
As glad o'er these old hills my voice did ring  
As does your own to-day.

If years could backward go,  
And bring again but half my youthful joy,  
Since the dawn of reason is the birth of woe,  
I'd wish to be a boy.

Sing on, dear mocking-bird,  
'And let your notes be sounded far and free,  
For that sweet song so oft, enrapt, I've heard  
You'll sing no more for me.

No more? Ah! should I be  
In far-off lands—where oft in dreams I've been—  
Still would I see you poised on this old tree,  
And hear your songs again.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

If by the banks of Ayr,  
Where nature's only poet poured his soul,  
Or 'neath Italia's classic sky, or where  
The castled Rhine doth roll,

By fortune's wave I'm borne,  
E'en there, down memory's vista will be heard,  
At noon, or twilight dim, or rising morn,  
Your song, sweet mocking-bird.

## SONNET.

Hail, infant day! The old year's life has ceased,  
And Night now draws her sable drapery  
From off thy golden cradle in the east,  
And millions watch the year's first-born to see.  
And, lo, the various train that comæ with thee!  
First, Hope, enchantress, smiling at thy side,  
Arrayed in beauty like a blushing bride,  
Her pearly finger points to joys to be.  
Next, Disappointment, hapless soul, doth bide  
A little way behind. And then appears  
Bemoaning Sorrow with her sighs and tears;  
And Pity, one whose tear-drops flow so free,  
Comes with a wreath of virgin flowers now  
To braid in beauty ill-starred Sorrow's brow.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### A CHILDHOOD IDYL.

I wonder, dear Rowena, where  
Your lot is cast to-day;  
Ah! little have I known of you  
Since the time you went away.

I wonder if the sunlight shines  
With just as bright a glow  
About your feet as it always did  
In the dear old long-ago.

Say, do the zephyrs still delight  
To fan two cheeks as fair  
As those a sun-browned urchin loved  
To kiss the blushes there?

I wonder if care sits as light  
Upon your heart to-day  
As when two pairs of bare feet chased  
The laughing hours away.

I wonder if your eyes flash now  
In splendid beauty still,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

As when a bold and headstrong boy  
They used to tame at will.

Ah, mind you of the day, my girl,  
I found the violets blue,  
And bound them with a pawpaw string  
And brought them home to you?

And how, when wandering by our-  
selves,  
We used to stop and look  
For pebbles red and purple in  
The "riffles" of the brook?

To-night, Rowena, as I go  
O'er the wreck-strewn field of time  
And gather up the memories  
And string them into rhyme,

I see you in your short-cut dress,  
Bare feet brown as a bee,  
Your bonnet red, from under which  
Two bright eyes peeped at me;

And I wonder, sweetheart of those  
days,  
If your memory, in its flight  
To childhood times, recalls the boy  
Who rhymes of you to-night.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### SOUTER JOHNY'S DEATH.

(In the Brogue of the Scotch.)

Come, doggies, a', baith auld an' nimble,  
Wha hunt the paitrick in the bramble,  
Or cotton-tail,  
An' ilka puppy quit his gambol,  
To weep an' wail.

Let ilka tail now drag the ground,  
An' ilka doggie stand around  
Where Johny's dead,  
An' howl, an' howl wi' mournfu' sound  
Aboon his head.

All ye wha like the fields to scour,  
Wi' gun an' dog for mony an hour  
In chill October,  
When frost haenipt the weed and flow'r,  
Come an' look sober,

For John, the prince o' every setter,  
Lies stiff an' cauld down in the gutter,  
To hunt na mair;

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Than him na kennel kept a better,  
Onywhere.

Ah! Tam, your brither, Souter John,  
Maybe you think's a-hunting gone  
Just for to-day;  
But, Tam, the trail puir Johny's on  
Leads far away.

Vile wretch wha dealt the poison!  
Surely  
He canna go to hell too early;  
For him sae mean,  
Auld Hornie's fires are bleezing fairly,  
An' pretty keen.

Ye fates wha fill the hazy breezes  
Wi' foul contagion an' diseases  
To pester man,  
An' ilka ache an' cramp that squeezes,  
Do a' ye can,

To mix your ills in hellish jumble,  
An' mak' a curse an' let it tumble  
Upon his pate.  
Lord, hear this prayer, sincere an'  
humble,  
An' grant it straight.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### ONE WHO DID NOT COME.

On the occasion of the Home-Comers' Re-Union,  
Jackson, August, 1909.

The sun had set, the day had furled  
Its banners o'er the town,  
And in the windows of the west,  
Night drew the curtains down.

The moon shone with the same soft  
light  
My boyish fancy loved  
Upon the same old "School House Hill"  
Where our frolic armies moved.

I stood upon that old play-ground  
Of many years ago,  
While shadowy forms through memo-  
ry's hall  
Came trooping to and fro.

I saw a barefoot boy and girl,  
Just as they used to be,  
Her dress cut to her ankles brown,  
His pants rolled to his knee.



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

The urchin's hair was almost white,  
Her's like the black-bird's wing,  
And bright the sparkle of her eye  
As water from a spring.

Health bloomed upon their childish  
cheeks,  
And from their presence fled  
All care as in the morning light  
The dew the night has shed.

I saw the youngster sally forth,  
Just as he used to go,  
Some play-thing in his hand, a sling,  
Or arrows and his bow.

Somehow his way led near a cot  
That stood upon a hill—  
The game was better 'long that route  
On which to try his skill.

I saw a stately girlish form  
Out in the lot somewhere—  
One hand she waved at him, the other  
Tossed her wealth of hair.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

I seemed to feel as he felt then,  
There in the twilight dim—  
His heart away up in his throat,  
And almost choking him.

My thoughts went back, I saw again  
The field beyond the barn,  
Two older brothers at their work,  
And barefoot thinning corn.

His task was out there in the field,  
His thoughts had gone astray,  
Had wandered, maybe, with his heart  
Somewhere else away.

I saw him stop and, standing, call  
To his brothers at their plows,  
And ask them if it wasn't time  
To go and bring the cows.

Along the road, down by the creek,  
I saw him linger till  
He heard her singing, saw her coming  
Tripping down the hill.

I don't know why it was, but, then,  
They'd always find their cows,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Or thought they would, at any rate,  
Where the other's chanced to browse.

Far, far the cattle must have roamed  
In the woods below the town,  
For always when the driving ceased  
The sun was almost down.

Two pairs of bare feet now must part—  
How slow they separate!  
A pretty girlish hand aloft  
Waves good-bye at the gate.

And thus it was, as there I stood,  
The forms of other days  
Came trooping past my vision down  
Memory's hallowed ways.

The night passed by, and morning  
came,  
And through my mind was humming  
The cares of business, when I thought  
Of Jackson's big Home-Coming—

And then of one I used to know  
So many years ago,  
When life was like the morning bright,  
My heart was like its glow.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Beneath the words inviting her,  
Three letters—they were the same  
I once remember carving just  
Below my sweetheart's name.

I sent it, and somehow I wished,  
And wondered if she'd come,  
That we might talk of the dear old  
days  
When we drove the cattle home.

TO ———

Seven sister stars, the Pleiades hight,  
Adorned the heavenly plain,  
Till fate o'ertook one orb of light—  
But six doth now remain.

Oh, may no cruel power come  
To deal thus ruthlessly,  
And snatch my lovely Pleiad from  
Friendship's galaxy!

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### AN ODE TO DEATH.

Often, when the day is spent,  
And Night creeps from his gloomy tent  
In the dim and quiet east; when the sun's at rest  
Behind the crimson battlements of the west,  
And darkness settles down,  
And slumber binds the weary town—  
Then, Death, poised on the murderous steel, you wait  
The coming of the victim to his fate.

When Love clasps tenderly to mother breast,  
And fondly soothes to rest  
The baby darling, marked from birth  
As all too frail for earth,  
Hope smiles and sings above the tiny face,  
Till shuddering Fear creeps on apace,  
And dark Despair.  
In spite of Love and Hope, in spite of prayer,  
You come with silent tread,  
And snap the slender thread,  
And set the spirit free;—  
Instead of solving, deepen still the mystery.

I heard the loud hurrah,  
And, looking forth, I saw  
The measured tread of men marching here and there,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And saw the dust and smoke of conflict in the air,  
And heard the roar of cannon and the rattle  
Of volleying musketry in the battle.  
Amid the tumult there revealed  
I saw the war-steeds, riderless, stampeding o'er the  
field;  
And in the battle's storm,  
Its fury and its carnage, stalked your form,  
Resolute and unpitying Death,  
Who holds the life of man light as the zephyr's  
breath.

In yonder hovel, where  
Dwell misery and despair,  
A woman smoothes the pillow, cools the burning  
brow  
Of a once strong man, weak as an infant now.  
About the bare and dingy wall  
The shadows creep and crawl,  
Cast by the flickering firelight's glare.  
Thou, Death, art also there,  
Insatiate vampire, night and day,  
Sapping your victim's life away.

Again, a wretch whose breast within  
The foul embrace of sin  
Has smothered each emotion save  
Remorse, the hound that tracks us to the grave.  
As he tosses on his bed of pain,  
Fighting the forms his fevered brain  
In wild delirium bids arise

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Before his bloodshot eyes,  
There, too, O Death, you sit, a stern, unpitying guest,  
Your fingers, icy cold, ready to be pressed  
On eyelids soon to droop and quiver,  
As the pulse-beats cease, and then to close forever.

Sometimes you come with pleasing mien,  
Like the sevenfold beauty that is seen  
Belting the sky in the rainbow's form,  
When the clouds have scattered after a storm,  
Upon the cheeks the rose's glow,  
Upon the brow the lily's snow.  
Not long, not long till beauty's bloom gives way  
To the sallow evidences of decay,  
For as the shadows of the night  
Blend with the beauty and the splendor bright  
Of the rising day, beneath  
The bloom upon the cheek lurks thy shadow, Death.  
A little while, a few short days,  
Your victim walks in pleasant ways;  
Pleasures dance along the hours bright and fair,  
And vanish like bubbles in the air,  
Till comes the saddest hour that mortals know,  
When we speak in whispers soft and low.

Bitter be the change or sweet,  
One fate alike we all must meet,  
One end awaits all human kind.  
The fetters that may bind  
Us to this life must loose their hold,  
Even though they be of gold.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Some shudder, Death, at thought of thee,  
And tremble when they see  
Wasting ills, thy sure precursors, come;  
While, weary with their burdens, some  
Are standing by the river-side,  
Beckoning across the tide  
For thee to call  
Them forth and lead them through thy silent hall.

It is not ours, dread destroyer, to command  
That thou withhold thy devastating hand  
And spare our idols of the passing hour.  
They, too, must perish like the autumn flower  
When touched by Winter's fingers cold,  
Alike the young and old.  
But, O wondrous truth!  
The Soul, clad in the vestments of immortal youth,  
Stands bold and proud,  
And free from wasting ills; 'twill need no shroud.  
The potency of faith lifts from this clod  
The infant spirit to the presence of its God,  
As that of unbelief, no less,  
To conscious forgetfulness.

As a leaf tossed here and there  
By the pitiless winds until  
It finds at length somewhere  
A place where it lieth still,  
So likewise he  
Who idly sings of thee,  
Monarch of all, will find among



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Other dead and fallen leaves, erelong,  
A quiet spot where he may lie  
Secure when the storm-clouds sweep the sky.

Ah, then, approach me softly, Death;  
Lay thy cold hand upon my brow,  
And gently steal away my breath,  
A messenger of mercy now;  
End the worry and the pain,  
The struggle made, I hope not all in vain.

### TO MY FRIEND DR. H. HILDRETH.

When cossack cares mount and rideout  
Upon their rude forays  
O'er memory's field and put to rout  
The thoughts of other days,

That, undismayed, oft quick reform  
To make a counter sally,  
Retake the citadel by storm,  
And round their banner rally,

Among the first, to memory true,  
To wheel for repossession  
Is a kindly thought, friend Doc., of you,  
Leading the procession.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### SYLPH.

'Twas nigh the dusky hour of day  
When Sylph and I were loitering  
Down where the meadow slopes away  
Beyond the barn to Jenkins' spring.

Along our path wild flowers bloomed,  
As I have known, ah! many a maid,  
In solitude, fair creature, doomed,  
Uncoveted, to bloom and fade.

'Twas there the graceful bluebell  
smiled,  
And on the daisy's rights intruded,  
And everywhere the violet wild,  
And dandelion, yellow-hooded.

We loitered on until the sun  
Red lay upon the forest-top,  
When Sylph her fairy self threw on  
A log and bade our wandering stop.

And further down the lazy herd  
Browsed where the early shadows  
lay,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And every happy-hearted bird  
Sang farewell to departing day.

We sat and listened to them sing,  
As slow the waning daylight died,  
But sweeter was the whispering  
Of gentle beauty at my side.

I put my arms about her waist,  
Half-conscious that I did it, though,  
And saw the two rose-buds that graced  
Her fair cheeks blush with deeper  
glow.

There, pillowed on my stormy breast,  
My Sylph in trembling rapture lay,  
Her beauty glowing like the west  
In splendor robed at close of day.

Ah, death, thou'st played a double part!  
From earth and pain my Sylph is  
free,  
But in my heart thou'st left the dart  
That took my love away from me.

My darling, true as shines to-night  
Yon splendid star we used to love,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

As is its light thou wast as bright;  
But thou art flown, my gentle dove.

In vain for me the flowers bloom,  
In vain the pale east heralds dawn,  
And I would not care if morn should  
come  
No more for me since thou are gone.

About her grave, each chorister,  
Your choicest song I'd have yousing,  
And bear to Heaven my love for her,  
Ye breezes that are whispering.

Haste hither, Spring, haste and renew  
Your floral wealth in yonder fallow,  
That I the choicest buds may strew  
Upon her grave beneath the willow.

## FOR AN ALBUM.

Lady, let me wish for thee  
(Who would not wish a fair friend  
well?)  
A long, long life whose days may be  
"As merry as a marriage bell."

LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

May Heaven grant that peace of mind  
Thy warm heart would have others  
share,  
And when some flowers thou wouldst  
bind,  
May roses spring up everywhere.

Oh, may no wintry storms of time  
Disturb the calm of youth's bright  
day;  
May life be like a sunny clime,  
And youth as fair as the month of  
May.

Thus would I wish for one who bears  
A heart that others' ills doth feel;  
Thus would I wish for her who shares  
Alike another's woe or weal.

As moonlight on a darksome stream,  
Soft-falling, gilds the waters there,  
So gently doth thy goodness seem  
To light the troublous stream of  
care.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### ODE TO THE MONTH OF MAY.

Wildwood flowers, manifold,  
Tangled in her locks of gold;  
White feet wet with meadow dew;  
Cheeks with the cream-white rose's  
hue;  
Smiling like a peri queen;  
Shapely form enrobed in green;  
Scattering with a lavish hand  
Beauty all about the land;  
By the fair skies overhead,  
And the song-birds, heralded,  
Like a fairy, down the way,  
Cometh, cometh lovely May.  
Like my lady's warm, sweet breath,  
Like the sign she whispereth  
When I'm absent for a day,  
Are the breezes, peerless May,  
Laden with the sweets of Spring  
For your queenly honoring.

May, you typify to me  
Endless spring-time that's to be,  
Past the setting of the sun,  
When my work and worry's done,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And the winter, oh, so cold!  
And the clouds away have rolled.  
May, you typify to me  
Much that I dare hope to see.

### TO SPRING.

Who the hawthorn has bereft  
Of blossoms white, with fingers deft,  
And fashioned for your lovely brow  
A garland, Spring, and decked you  
now?

Who has plucked those flowers fair  
And dressed them in your sunny hair,  
And a wondrous robe of green  
Woven for the matchless queen?

Time of song-birds, time of flowers,  
Warm south winds and fresh'ning  
showers,  
Time of humming of the bees  
In the blossom-burdened trees.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Something of thy beauty, Spring,  
Mirror in this heart of mine;  
Something of thy promise bring  
From that bounteous store of thine.

Melt the ice from out my heart,  
Bid each evil thought depart;  
Let thy genial influence move  
To deeds of kindness and of love.

See my brother, weary-worn,  
Care-oppressed, by passion torn;  
Let thy cheerful sunshine reign  
In his troubled breast again—

Joy in one continuous stream  
Ripple through his heart, I pray,  
As, sparkling in the sunlight's gleam,  
The brooklet laughs along its way.

## TO A WOOD WREN.

Sweet birdling of the wood,  
Of light and restless wing,  
Why in the depths of solitude  
Art thou wintering?



LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Say, hast thou luckless flown  
Far from thy tiny race,  
On venturous wing and all alone,  
To this wild place?

Knowst thou not how to find  
Again thy native wood,  
Where hawk nor th' savage prowling  
kind  
Thirst for thy blood?

No, thou'rt not lost, for thine  
Is that sweet chirp now heard,  
That frolic wing. Thou dost not pine,  
My little bird.

Hither to th' forest vast,  
And coverts thick, thou'st flown,  
To bide till winter's storms are past,  
And spring comes on.

But, birdie, didst thou reckon  
That whilst from wintry storm  
Thou'rt safe, all round's a murd'rous  
pack  
Would do thee harm?

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

What if the prowling coon,  
Or cunning mink, should steal  
Upon thy roost and make, too soon,  
Of thee a meal?

Then when the spring would come  
The meadow, field and tree  
Would don their robes again, and  
bloom,  
But not for thee.

Oh, may so sad a fate  
Ne'er on my birdie gather;  
Light be thy wing to distant date,  
Nor ruffed a feather.

Good-bye, sweet wren, again  
My lingering feet must tramp;  
An empty pot hangs in the crane—  
Meat's scarce at camp.

## EUGENE FIELD.

Lately, from His home on high,  
Somewhere 'way up in the sky,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

The good, kind Lord sent down  
His angel and invited one,  
Whose labors here on on earth were  
done,  
To come and get his crown.

He whom the angel took away  
Loved little children so, they say,  
That when the good man died,  
And they were told that he was dead,  
Each bowed in grief his little head,  
And cried, and cried, and cried.

But little children who had gone  
To Heaven, and were sitting on  
The Savior's knees, when they  
Looked out and saw him coming, ran,  
Shouting, as only children can,  
To meet him on the way.

Scampering across the heavenly lawn,  
Forgetting all about the throne,  
And everything so great,  
Eager to take him by the hand,  
When Mr. Field, at God's command,  
Entered the golden gate.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### FLOWERS.

Except the flowers blooming  
In the garden of the heart,  
There's nothing more beautiful,  
In nature or in art,

Than the little violet blossoms  
That peep up in the spring,  
Or bluebells on the hillside,  
In the forest clustering.

Oh, the beauty of the flowers,  
Blooming here and there,  
Is light for us reflected  
From a brighter world somewhere!

Won't He who made the flowers,  
And clothed them in the light,  
The beauty and purity  
Of His presence bright,

Into the depths of my soul,  
Darkened by the clouds of sin,  
Mirror some heavenly beauty,  
Let His light shine in?

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### LINES TO A BIRD.

Cruel the art,  
Poor bird, that killed and placed you there  
To form a part  
Of that fair lady's plumage rare.

Who will consent  
That she, who hither came to pray,  
Has a heart as innocent  
As yours was in its gladsome day?

And who can tell  
If the praise she offers in this throng  
Is as acceptable  
As once ascended with your song?

Whatever land  
Claimed your nativity, there  
The same kind Hand  
Created you that did the lady fair.

Throughout your days  
Your little throat was made and meant  
To sing God's praise,  
Unharm'd, a harmless instrument;

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And th' religion that  
Would take your pretty form and pin  
It to a lady's hat  
May point to Heaven, but—not enter in.

### DICK.

The old banjo, clasped in its cover,  
Lies on the shelf unstrung;  
About it, cobwebbed, dusty, hover  
Quaint old songs unsung,  
For Dick is gone,  
And with him joy and sweet content have flown.

The lamp gives forth a feeble glow,  
Reluctant to be bright,  
Just like my spirit, sad and low,  
Unwilling to be light,  
Since Dick is gone;  
And weary, weary now the night wears on.

Yes, Dick is dead; hushed are his songs,  
And hushed his banjo, too;  
Gone where to be my spirit longs,  
Beyond the heavens' blue,  
For life is drear,  
And living has for me but little cheer.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

As simple as the songs he sung,  
And tender as a lover  
But he's like his banjo now, unstrung,  
And lies there in his cover.  
How Pity sighed  
Upon that woful day when poor Dick died!

Where oft, at dubious twilight's stilly hour,  
Bright angels come from Heaven's gate to sing;  
Where, waked by southern breeze or vernal shower,  
The early spring birds' joyous carols ring,  
And sound of busy bees at noon floats o'er the honied  
green,  
Freed from the troublous cares of life, the minstrel  
sleeps serene.

## ODE TO THE EAST WIND.

Blow back, blow back, East Wind! Why stay  
To torment mortals so  
The livelong night, the livelong day?  
Blow backward, blow!

Why league your influence fell  
With the black cat's spell

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

That leaped across the path in front of me?  
Yon misty star that now I see  
Dim in the heavens low,  
As if ashamed to show  
Its sickly face in the presence bright  
Of fair Arcturus of the golden hair,  
Sends down from out the northern night  
Ill omens plenty and to spare,  
Without the added portents which you bring,  
Unwelcome East Wind, on your evil wing.

I would rather see a yeoman bring a hoe  
In my front door than have you blow.  
Oh, dreaded East Wind, quick, return again  
Across the eastern plain  
To caverns deep where you are wont to bide  
In some steep and rugged mountain's side!

Have I not seen the grain field swept by you,  
The rich soil sickened and crops cease to grow  
Where once they grew  
Luxurient? Oh, East Wind, backward blow!

Some nights while in my chamber there  
I'm sitting, dreaming with head bowed low,  
You come and blow;  
Then, rallying from everywhere,  
Those fates that pester mortals come unseen  
In the invisible garments of the night,  
And augur things to happen that have never been,



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And fill my soul with fright.  
I hear them outside in the gloom,  
And yonder in that haunted room  
They rattle the window-pane;  
And in the garret overhead  
I hear invisible footfalls tread  
Again, and again;  
And screaming with fright,  
Birds that sleep at night  
And in the day time sing, do come and go  
Whene'er you blow  
After the sun is down

And the stars are out;  
And all about  
The quiet town  
Dogs leave their kennels and begin to howl;  
And from the woods the horned owl  
Flies to the elm near by,

And, East Wind, ever as you blow,  
His screams, like an old witch's cry,  
Pierce me, chill me, fright me so.

And, mixed with these, there sometimes come beneath  
The midnight moon, whene'er you blow,  
Of Hecate's tribe that met on Forres' heath  
The ingrate who laid good King Duncan low;  
And spells are wrought that make my blood run chill  
In every vein, and my stout heart stand still.

And if you come when the day god on  
His golden car sets the wide heavens aflame,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And bids the stars be gone,  
Your evil influence is just the same.

The cattle that are browsing when  
You fan the pastures green, as all men know,  
Take on no added flesh, because you blow.  
The industrious hen,  
Infertile as a prude,  
Drops eggs that ne'er will make a brood.

Full many times I've heard them say  
That when you blow the granddam grey,  
With foresight keen, and judgment best,  
The nursing babe lifts from its mother's breast  
And three times through a chair that's bottomless  
Passes back and forth the lump of helplessness  
To ward of ills that sometimes fret  
The hopeful, such as colic, croup, et cet.

Oh, East Wind, who is it that does not know  
The ills you bring to mortals when you blow?  
Quick, then, return again  
Across the eastern plain  
To caverns deep where you are wont to bide  
In some steep and rugged mountain-side.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### TO A LITTLE CHICKEN FOUND OUT IN THE COLD.

(In the Brogue of the Scotch.)

When a' aroond was frozen fast,  
An' January sent its blast  
Blowing frae the bleak norwast  
    Wi' furious din,  
An' your wee life was nigh its last,  
    I took you in.

Wi' pity's hand I gied you food,  
An' wrapped you up sae warm an'  
    gude,  
That soon in sic a lively mood  
    You did appear  
I thought in hours o' solitude  
    You'd gie me cheer.

The way you rin about the floor,  
An' picked its surface ower an'ower,  
I guess you thought that never more  
    The cauld, cauld wind  
Would roond your tender body roar  
    Wi' touch unkind.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

When e'ning cam' I tried my best  
To mak' for you a cozy nest,  
Where cat nor could might you molest,  
    An' when 'twas done  
I put you where I thought you'd rest  
    Till night were gone.

But when the daylight cam' ance mair,  
Sae chilly was the morning air,  
That wi' fear a-bordering on despair,  
    I approached your bed,  
An' found you, orphaned chickie, there,  
    A' could an' dead.

We needna close the door on death;  
Na winds that scour ower the heath  
Are half sae cauld as is his breath,  
    It will steal in  
In spite o' a' the powers beneath  
    The blazing sin.

For your mither thro' the lang, chill  
    night  
How maun you've ca'd wi' voice sae  
    slight,  
Still thinking somewhere aff she might  
    Chance hear you weep,  
Till death, moved at your helpless  
    plight,  
Soothed you to sleep.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Out yonder where the bleak winds  
    blaw,  
Where cauld can't bite nor hunger  
    gnaw,  
Laigh underneath the white, white  
    snaw  
    Maun be your grave;  
There your sleep will better be than a'  
    My pity gave.

A' roond amang the rich an' grand,  
In every corner o' the land,  
Puir little human chickies stand  
    In want an' sin,  
Oh, whase will be the tender hand  
    To tak' them in?

## TO A LITTLE CHILD.

In fancy I have often heard  
    Seraphic voices calling,  
And from the starry heavens I've seen  
    Bright sparks of beauty falling;  
And I had thought 'twas but a glimpse  
    Of beauty I should see,  
But, baby-bright-eyes, I behold  
    The soul of beauty, seeing thee.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### PITY.

O Pity, how tender is thy touch!  
Soft as the down that lies  
On the cheeks of maiden beauty,  
As a zephyr when it dies.

How gentle is thy voice! From out  
The depths of love it flows,  
Like the voice of the wind about  
A soiled and stricken rose.

An angel from the sky, sent down  
By the great God of love:  
When the deluge is at its height,  
A green leaf and a dove.

Where all is dark, and when the heart  
Yearns for a mother's prayer,  
For a mother's voice that can not come,  
Sweet Pity, thou art there.

The heart, kind angel, moved by thee  
To soothe another's pain,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Receives in measure doubly rich  
The blessing back again.

Oh, enter thou this breast of mine,  
Give me, a broken reed,  
The courage and the strength to be  
A help in time of need.

### BROTHER BEN.

**My friend and brother editor, Ben H. Adams, quits  
the newspaper business.**

Is the rumor true, that, everywhere,  
Is bandied over town,  
The sponge has gone up in the air,  
And you've laid your faber down?

For forty years or more you've pushed  
That weapon in your den,  
And watched the quarry as it rushed  
To cover, Brother Ben.

Its business end you'd often wield  
Deserving knaves to flout,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

The other, erring worth to shield,  
Would rub their failings out.

At times traduced, reviled and dubbed  
The wickedest of men,  
Because, forsooth, you often rubbed  
It to 'em, Brother Ben.

Knives stood and trembled through  
and through  
At facts you often penned;  
But who has ever heard of you  
Going back upon a friend?

But now you're out, perhaps for good,  
For time is pressing hard;  
Although on different lines we've stood,  
Here's luck to you, old pard.

Somehow I hate to see it, Ben,  
For it brings to mind, you know,  
The not far-distant hour when  
They'll smile to see me go.



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### THE MOVER GIRL.

Jackson's streets were full of people  
On a summer Saturday;  
The clock up in the court-house steeple  
Tolled the sultry hours away.

That day some movers stopped in town,  
And one could plain discover  
By their old wagon, most run down,  
And its weather-beaten cover,

That they were people rather worse  
Off in the world than many;  
The man, I guess, had in his purse  
But little cash, if any.

'Twas by the store the wagon halted,  
Within a locust's shade,  
And soon upon the pavement vaulted  
A lovely mover maid.

There, in her home-spun country dress,  
The artless beauty shone;  
I could not think she looked the less  
Like, as I've often known,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

A pretty wild-flower in the wood  
Dressed round with brush and brier,  
And withered leaves—a very rude,  
Inelegant attire.

Dark as midnight was her hair,  
Whose glossy tresses draped  
A neck as perfect and as fair  
As chisel ever shaped.

There nature plied her brush so well,  
And all her power spent,  
'Twas like the soft shades in a shell  
Of cream and crimson blent.

And ever as I looked at her,  
Like the modest jonquil flower,  
She'd hang her head as if she were  
Ashamed to own her power.

Her cheeks were tinged with the dyes  
that set  
Aflame the sunset skies;  
And I could not, if I would, forget,  
I know, those hazel eyes,

For on me still their vestal glow  
Doth fall, or so it seems.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

(I wonder whose glance shun they  
now,  
Where now their soft light gleams.)

But, ah! too soon our sweet dreams  
fade,  
Too soon the blossoms blight,  
And soon, too soon, my mover maid  
Was hurried from my sight.

My heart is not a truant, no,  
Gone with that girl a-moving;  
It feels somewhat nomadic, though,  
And not averse to roving.

My breast, impervious, long has dared  
The blue-eyed archer's arrow,  
But this escape, though yet I'm spared,  
Confess I must was narrow.

## ON LEARNING OF THE MARRIAGE OF AN OLD SWEETHEART.

May Peace, the mild-eyed, gentle dove,  
Attend the happy twain,  
And all through life the light of love  
Gild wedlock's holy chain.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### THE VAGABONDS.

His name is Tige, an' I picked 'im up  
In Eelinois, w'en he wuz a pup.  
Onery, eh? Wal, that mout be,  
But thar's p'int's about 'im yer don't see,  
An' I wouldn't give 'im fur no man's hoss.  
Yer needn't grin—that's gospel, boss.  
Fleas? Yes, I obsarve he shakes that lim'  
Ez ef thar mout be a few a-pesterin' 'im.—  
What's that, stranger? P'inter? No. Setter?  
He's not that, nuther, but a dog that's better  
'n any yer fine-ha'red breed. That cur  
I'll put 'g'inst dogs from anywher'  
Fur locatin' varmints in trees an' logs,  
An' standin' guard, an' ketchin' hogs,  
An' the like er that. But these p'int's, sir,  
Ain't the most uv what I like 'im fur.

D' yer see me, stranger, me, Jack Primm?  
Wal, I wouldn't be her ef 'twusn't fur him.  
Now lis'n, pard: Three year ago  
I worked on a tie contrac', yer know,  
Down 'n Stoddard County. Livin' wuz rough  
Down thar, my frien', an' the crowd wuz tough.  
Ten cents a tie wuz the price they paid,  
An' yer had ter take it out 'n trade,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Jest ez that feller Holliday  
Is makin' 's men do now, they say.  
But I worked along an' enjoyed life  
In them days, pard, w'en Nell wuz my wife.—

Turn 'er roun', Polly girl, so ez he  
Kin see yer face. Our Polly—she  
's our unly child; an' ther' never wuz  
Two looked more 'like then her 'n 'er mother does.

I follered tiein' fer about a year,  
W'en I noticed she acted a little queer,  
Did Nell—the way she treated me.  
She wuzn't like she used ter be.  
It bothered me some, but I thought it best  
Ter do my part 'n' let her do the rest.  
So I worked on reg'lar, ez a poor man hez  
Ter do, 'n' trusted ter luck, ez the feller says.

One mornin' Nell wuz fussin' an' stewin',  
Ez she sometimes done. An', jest ter be doin',  
I joked her a little, an', says she ter me,  
She wished I'd die so ez Arch Crabtree  
Could take my place. Ever sence that day  
Things fer Jack's bin runnin' t'other way.  
Crabtree wuz the feller that knocked me out.  
He didn't work, but jest used about.

It wuzn't long arter, w'en one hot day  
I wuz gittin out ties in the usual way,  
An' Crabtree come up ter chat awhile,  
Appearantly in a friendly style.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

He set on a log thar 'n hour or more,  
Ez he hed done several times before;  
An' while I wuz workin' with my back ter him,  
Expectin' nothin', he grabbed a l.m'  
An' fetched me a lick that turned up my toes,  
An' left me fer dead, ez I suppose.  
I laid thar helpless tell 'way next day,  
An' the nighest house a mile away.  
I hollered loud, and I thought they ort  
'er hev hearn me, but my breath wuz short,  
I reckon, fur he hit ter kill,  
An' he didn't like much uv hevin' his will.  
Tige here wuz with me, an' he hollered, too,  
He barked, I mean—looked like he knew.  
Arter awhile the critter begin ter whine,  
An' come an' put his nose ter mine,  
An' licked my face, then snuffed the air  
A little bit while standin' there,  
An' looked down at me in a pitiful way.

'Long 'bout the middle uv the-day,  
I reckon it wuz, 'twixt grunt an' groan,  
I stirred a little an' seed Tige wuz gone.  
'Twuzn't long tell he come back agin,  
An' acted ez ef tellin' me whar he'd bin,  
An' barked an' whined around awhile,  
An' cried about it like a chile,  
Then trotted off, then back. Then come  
The folks with a wagon an' hauled me home,  
Like a crippled soldier, which once't I'd bin,  
An' put me in purty good shape agin,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

An' patched me up an' I soon got straight.

But Nell, she left on the very same date  
That Crabtree done me up with a lim'.  
Uv course when she went she went with him.—

That bell means church, I reckon. Well,  
Polly, we'll 'tend. I allers told Nell  
We'd bring up Polly in the way that's right,  
An' ef Nell her duty's seen fit to slight,  
I'll try to do the best I kin,  
Ter keep Polly's feet out'n the ways uv sin.

---

When night came on, some miles on the road  
Out from the town he flung down his load,  
And the vagabonds struck camp for the night,  
And soon had a big fire blazing bright.  
If others' eyes could have seen them there  
Before sleep came to banish care,  
They'd have seen the man in reverent thought,  
And heard this prayer by the angels taught:

“Father above, watch over Thy own,  
Take care of poor mother wherever she's gone.  
If out in the dangerous world there be  
Other little wanderers just like me,  
Keep them safe in Thy tender care,  
This, dear Jesus, is my little prayer.”

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### MARGERY.

My Margery, sweet Margery,  
Each day would very gloomy be  
Without the pure love-light divine  
Beaming from those eyes of thine,  
    Comforting and cheering me,  
Sweet Margery, my Margery.

When morning's light begins to pale  
The eastern skies, 'twould not avail  
To rout the gloom besetting me  
Without your love, my Margery;  
    Night would linger through the day,  
    And joy take wing and fly away.

Would count for naught and idle be  
All the seeming witchery  
In morning's glow and evening's gloom,  
In birds that sing and flowers that  
    bloom,  
Did I not love and were not loved  
By you whose heart I've constant  
    proved.



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

I saw you once when sickness pale  
Had seized on you, and watched you  
    fail  
From day to day. And when I prayed  
That death's dire purpose might be  
    stayed,  
    His dart glanced from the shining  
    shield  
Protecting Heaven there revealed,

And you were spared, my Margery,  
To bless and cheer and comfort me.  
Long as the sun presumes to burn  
And bring the day on its return,  
    You'll changeless be in your true  
    love,  
And I will likewise constant prove.

## IN THE GARDEN.

In yonder tree the cat-bird  
Is singing to the sun  
His roundelay of greeting  
For the day that's just begun.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

A hundred thousand flowers  
Are blooming here and there,  
Lavishly surrendering  
Their sweetness to the air.

The bumble-bee is droning  
About from bloom to bloom,  
To bill into the hollyhock  
The humming-bird has come.—

Ah! yonder sits a maiden  
Under the lilac tree,  
Pining for her lover—  
Wonder who he can be.

Poor thing! I'll hasten to her,  
Wipe her tear-damped eyelids dry,  
Sighing for her lover—  
Maybe it is I.

## A LULLABY.

Peeping thro' the window-pane,  
Dancing in the air,  
Looking at baby  
With the flaxen hair;

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Peeping through the window,  
What was it the fairy said  
To little baby  
In her tiny bed?

"Sleep, little baby,  
Till the break of dawn,  
Angels watch o'er you  
Till the night is gone;

"See that no elfin  
Take baby 'way  
From her little cradle  
Before the break of day.

"See that the Winkleman,  
With the ugly face,  
Steal not baby  
From her little place.

"Baby's little slumber ship  
Is sailing near the moon—  
Sail on, little voyager,  
Day will break soon."

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### WHEN I AM GONE.

When I am gone whom would I have come round  
To make things cheerful rear my grassy mound?

I'll tell you what would best  
Become my place of rest:  
Let my loved favorites of the field and air  
And circling forest often visit there.

The lonesome Turtle Dove  
There call unto his love  
At early morn, at noon or eventide,  
Until his truant mate flies to his side.

And the Robin there be seen  
Hopping o'er the green,  
And stately Fiel'-Lark sing his morning song,  
And Yellow-Hammer, too, come lumbering 'long.

And early in the spring  
The little Blue-Bird sing  
About the place. And should not now and then  
Come there to see me, too, the brown Wood-Wren?

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And there from bush to bush  
Should flit the gifted Thrush  
And music make. The sweet-voiced Cat-Bird, too,  
Should sing his tender song the whole day through.

And in the tall trees near  
One frequently should hear  
The noisy Black-Bird calling to his mate,  
In leafy spring, at morn or evening late.

And there should sometimes come  
And sit and beat his drum  
The gaudy Woodpecker, as if he would  
Awake to life the sleeper if he could.

And on some neighboring tree  
A visitor should be  
The old black Crow, and, as he's wont to do,  
Look round awhile and caw a time or two.

Then when the twilight comes,  
And the whirring beetle hums,  
I hope from out the woods the Owl will fly,  
And sound his doleful note near where I lie.

And slyly creeping out  
From stubble roundabout,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Bob White should come and perch and whistle  
there  
In that lone place unto his lady fair.

The Red-Bird and the Jay,  
I know, will pick a day  
And from the thicket come to visit me,  
And hop and fly about from tree to tree.

And one should often hear  
That little creature queer,  
The Humming-Bird, as busy as a bee,  
Darting 'mongst the blooming shrubbery.

In gay and joyous spring,  
The Oriole should bring  
His lady there to hang her nest on high  
In some tall tree not far from where I lie.

And on a cloudy day,  
The chittering Swallows, they,  
When it has rained, should fly about my mound,  
Sailing swiftly low down near the ground.

And when the night is near,  
The Bullbat should appear,  
And fly around upon expansive wing  
About the place where I am slumbering.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

In snowy winter time  
Should frequent there and climb  
About the branches of the trees and sit  
And peck the bark Sapsucker and Tomtit.

And one should come there, too,  
The little Sparrow, who  
Delights to flit around in playful rout,  
Clinging to the weed-stocks roundabout.

When come the cold and sleet,  
The Snow-Bird, too, should greet  
The winter Sparrow there, and there also  
Pay his respects, the little Eskimo.

And on th' approach of night  
His solitary flight  
The Heron oft will bend o'er field and dell  
To pass the place where I am resting well.

From early spring until  
The frost is on the hill,  
While other warblers wonder at his power,  
The Mockingbird should sing there hour by hour.

In summer-time the Shrike,  
Upon a mullein-spike,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Should sit not far away and look as though  
He'd lost a friend in him who lieth low.

The Rain-Crow, too, should fly,  
When it is hot and dry  
In summer-time, to some tree-top that's green,  
And croak for rain to come refresh the scene.

The Redwing Black-Bird, he,  
Flying from tree to tree,  
Should let his liquid voice in music flow  
To make it cheerful round the scene below.

When the moonlight's over all,  
The Whip-poor-will should call  
Near by my grave his mate across the hill,  
Or in the grove along the rippling rill.

If, then, when I am gone  
None come to look upon  
My grave but loved ones who bemoan my fall  
And these dear friends, what matters it at all?



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### EVENING BEFORE THE FIRST FROST.

Hushed now the blust'ring sound  
Of norland winds; the clouds have passed away,  
All save a lingering few that gather round  
The couch of dying day.

From the dark'ning heavens high  
The autumn moonbeams fall like golden lances;  
A diamond in the gloomy eastern sky,  
Bright Mars advances.

The twilight beetle's boom  
The stillness breaks of some more southern clime;  
Hark! deep-sounding thro' the thick'ning gloom,  
The town clock strikes the time.

Chill are the evening airs,  
And the Borean king, upon some icy height,  
Now plies his frosty shuttle and prepares  
The earth a robe of white.

Home from the crowded streets,  
With buttoned coat, hastes now the business wight,  
And thus his neighbor at the wood-pile greets,  
With, "We'll have frost to-night."

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

The noisy cur is still,  
We note him bark and, playful, leap no more,  
But, shivering there out in the twilight chill,  
He, whining, paws the door.

In yonder lot the swine,  
With instinct true, prepares his grassy bed,  
And, wheeling, shakes the weeds, a truthful sign  
Of winter near ahead.

Where is my favorite bird,  
The many-noted warbler whose sweet song,  
When comes the peaceful twilight hour is heard  
Th' suburban trees among?

Snug in some cedar-tree,  
On whose high top he's wont to sing so gay,  
Or, hid in yonder sheltering spruce-pine, he  
Awaits another day.

Oh, see those flowers there,  
Unconscious all of their impending doom!  
Knew they their peril would they seem so fair?  
So gaily would they bloom?

I know 'tis weakness quite,  
But sooth I scarce can stay the rising tear,  
So soon to see unconscious beauty's blight,  
Its bright bloom disappear.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

See, see how wondrous fair  
The tree-tops look, gay-gilded by the sun!  
Their deep-green leaves, tho', tremble in despair,  
For now their race is run.

Adown the fallow dell  
By dark December's storms they'll soon be borne,  
With ruthless violence and hurled pell-mell,  
Of all their beauty shorn.

Thus for a little date  
Poor heedless man disports him light and gay,  
But soon come on the blust'ring winds of fate  
And he is swept away.

## CUPID AND THE SERPENT.

I took me to the fields one summer's day,  
When Ceres, rustic queen, her golden hair  
Waved o'er the ripening grain. While on my way  
I spied a crystal fountain bubbling where  
O'erspreading trees shut out the sunlight's glare,  
And some few blooms around the margin blent  
Their fragrance with the spicy peppermint,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And burdened with their sweets the breezes there.  
I was athirst, and forth my form I bent  
To quaff refreshment from that tempting spring,  
When, lo! a serpent with a deadly sting  
Leaped thence and stung me, cruel punishment.  
Long, long I suffered, and I'm sure no dart  
Could give such pain, tho' it should pierce my heart.

All this was in the May-time of my life,  
When sprightly youth as yet had never known  
The freaks of Love. Again (earth now was rife  
With vernal beauty) I walked out alone.  
The bluebells were in bloom, the haw, new-blown,  
With blossoms white, and fair sweet-williams, too,  
And violet with eye of heaven's blue;  
And sweet was heard the brown thrush's amorous  
tone.  
But, lack-a-day! I met a maiden who  
Outshone the auburn-tressed Morn, and, lo!  
From by her side Love sprang his fatal bow,  
And sent his wicked dart my poor heart through.  
Love and the serpent should combine their bane  
The day that finds me strolling out again.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### WALK WITH THY CHILD.

Thou who didst conquer Death,  
Walk with thy child through this dark vale,  
Sustain his too imperfect faith,  
Lest it may some time fail,  
Till broken lies the golden bowl,  
And open stands the prison gate,  
When, unrestrained, the wistful soul  
Shall seek its high estate.  
As some skilled player who can wake  
No notes responsive to his skill,  
On a harp of an inferior make,  
And bids the chords be still,  
Takes up an instrument of perfect tone,  
Whereon his wondrous power is shown,  
So shall the spirit lay aside  
This instrument of coarse design,  
And, in its power and its pride,  
Strike one with fire divine.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### CONNIE'S GRAVE.

Bring hither, Spring, your choicest flowers,  
And let them bloom full bonny;  
Bring here your birds, in the long, long hours,  
And let them sing for Connie.

Here, Summer, let your sounding bees  
Their busy labors tend;  
To cheer the spot, the gentle breeze  
And fresh'ning shower send.

And, Autumn, when you doom to death  
The verdant life around,  
Oh, do not blow your chilly breath  
About this tiny mound.

King Winter, curb your noisy car  
When by this way you come,  
For fear the sacred scene you mar  
Around this little tomb.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### LITTLE CONNIE.

BY A. G. McGUIRE.

Little feet upon the railing,  
Little fingers grip the gate,  
Pretty eyes peep through the paling,  
Look for papa, coming late,  
Loving eyes that, every evening,  
Peep at papa through the gate.

When the frost came for the flowers,  
When the winds were growing wild,  
Angels, gathering up the leaflets,  
Took away our darling child,  
Bore her gently up to Heaven,  
Where no winds are blowing wild.

Ever watching at the gateway,  
Watching at the golden bars,  
Peeping 'way down thro' the darkness,  
From her home among the stars;  
Calling papa, in the darkness,  
From her home among the stars;

Laughing eyes that look for papa,  
Dancing eyes that come and wait,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

All alone poor little Connie  
Watches at the golden gate;  
Little Connie, light of Heaven,  
Peeping thro' the golden gate.

And she thinks we all are coming,  
In her innocent delight,  
For she knows no other pathway  
But the one that leads to light—  
Came, and went back up to Heaven,  
In the path that leads to light.

When our brightest flowers are fading,  
When the winds are growing wild,  
Let us gather in the pathway,  
Leading to our darling child.

## AT ASHLAND.

These hoary pine and cedar trees  
That drop their feeble bows to rot,  
And nod so doubtful in the breeze,  
Will pass away and be forgot;  
But, Clay, long as our flag shall wave  
O'er city, town and plain and steep,  
So long shall garlands deck your grave,  
And patriots there be seen to weep.



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### OLD BLAZE.

In early spring, oft when the weary day  
    Crept down the west and slowly entered in  
Its golden gate, and breezes died away,  
    He would leave the village and its hated din;

And yonder where that hill looks down the brook  
    O'er meadows stretching to the distant wood,  
Is where the lonely man himself betook,  
    In solitude o'er nature's charms to brood.

Long would he linger there upon that hill  
    To listen to the frog-choir's quivering song,  
And to the calling of the whip-poor-will,  
    Whose curious cry is heard the whole night long.

And well I mind, when I was yet a child,  
    How often I would meet a lonely man,  
Out in the fields, or in the forest wild,  
    Or wandering where the shadowed streamlet ran.

That time I knew him as the town-folks did,—  
    “Old Blaze.” Forsooth, he bore no other name.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Perhaps beneath his dingy garments hid  
A soul that may have felt the poet's flame.

Mayhap Old Blaze's was a bosom which  
Confined a soul with powers that fall to few,  
Tuned to a Burns' or Bryant's tender pitch,  
Or felt the flame a Milton's spirit knew.

Time slipped away, and soon the whip-poor-will  
And meadow-choir sweet music made no more;  
The fields, the brooks, and his accustomed hill  
No charms for duller spirits ever bore.

Old Blaze passed off, his smothered spark went out;  
None ever saw its bright and heavenly gleams,  
But somewhere far away from here, no doubt,  
Unsmothered are its bright and heavenly beams.

## ODE TO A HONEY BEE.

When the sun bursts through the eastern gloom,  
And the day unfolds like a flower in bloom,  
And the amazing skill of the Master Hand  
Has spread His glory o'er the land,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Like an arrow speeding from the bow,  
Forth from your waxen home you go.

Lost to the sight that is given me,  
But Another's eye doth follow thee,  
And marks thy flight from bloom to bloom,  
And thy return when the shadows come.  
All day long among the flowers,  
And the blossoms sweet in the sunny hours,  
No selfish motive urging you,  
Your ceaseless labor you pursue.  
For others' good, from day to day,  
You toil your little life away,  
Bringing from the wood and dell  
Wherewith to fashion, cell on cell,  
The only handiwork we know  
Touches perfection here below,  
Gathering from the flowery fields  
The honied store that nature yields.

Oh, wonder-working little bee,  
Stop a moment and tell me  
Whence comes your power to form at will  
Your hexic cell with matchless skill,  
Assembling, like a master mind,  
Th' unerring rules of science, combined  
With those of art, till men have gazed  
Upon your work and stood amazed.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

(Why boast, proud man, to you is given,  
Alone, the spark divine from heaven?  
Behold here in the little bee  
The same light God has given thee.)

Little brown bee, a tiny thing,  
Rich the lesson you do bring.  
In you we mortals may behold  
The philosophy of life unfold,  
The purpose reaching down from God  
Through man, through you, unto the sod—  
That all the worry, all the strife,  
The plan, the purpose of this life  
Is but to labor like the bee,  
Toiling on unselfishly,  
Our wasting energies employ  
For others' good, for others' joy,  
With faith unfaltering that the eye  
That marks the bee will, by and by,  
When the shadows of the evening come,  
Follow still, and guide us home.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### LINES

Written in anticipation of a hunt in the Big Swamp forty miles south of Jackson.

Swift, swift fly the days and bring round the glad  
morning

When swampward we'll tramp it light-hearted and  
gay,

When we'll strike for that shanty, the hut that's  
adorning,

A wilderness wild some few miles down the way.

How I long to be there where the light deer are  
bounding

Through bramble and brake, o'er bottom and bog,  
And hear through the day the wild hunter a-hounding,  
And watch for my chance by some tree or old log!

How I long to be there where the owl's nightly  
screaming

Disturbs the dark stillness like an old witch's wail,  
Where at night the cold stars through the cypress  
are beaming

To light the lone coon on his foraging trail!

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

By the black "Otter Pond" let me soon be a-wandering,  
And down where "The Opening" its grandeur unfolds;  
Along the "Big Slough" let me soon be meandering,  
Or out where the ghostly "Big Overflow" scolds.

Than the wolf's hungry howl what music is sweeter,  
As deep in the dark night he venture's to roam?  
Than the swamp hunter's pleasure what pleasure's completer,  
The forest his field, a rude shanty his home?

## BUNNY DEAD.

When I got home an' foun' my Bunny dead,  
I turned away f'om him an' hung my head  
An' cried,  
I wus so sorry. Bunny looked so spry  
An' happy when I left. I wonder why  
He died.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

If I'd knowed he wus sick I'd stayed away  
F'om school, I would, an' doctored him that day.

That's what

A feller gits by goin' to school all time.  
Schools ain't no 'count nohow, ain't worth this dime  
I've got.

When papa come an' sister called an' said  
To him that my poor little squir'l wus dead,

He then

Said somethin', an' I looked at him an' tried  
To keep f'om cryin' 'n' couldn't, an' I cried  
Again.

Mamma said come in to dinner, there's somethin'  
good.

But I went 'round behind the house an' stood

Awhile,

An' wiped the tears away, an' never cried  
No more, but straightened up my face an' tried  
To smile.

But I must come to dinner, mamma said;  
But all I et wus just a piece of bread;

An' then

I started back to school, an' went 'round by  
His cage an' looked at him, an' had to cry  
Again.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

When school let out, down under th' apple tree  
Me an' sister dug a grave, an' soon as we  
    Got done it,  
We buried Bunny there, then hunted 'round  
An' laid some weed tops for flowers that we found  
    Upon it.

An' I went an' got a brick, one that wus red,  
An' put it for a tombstone at his head  
    To stay,  
An' scratched his name on it, an' then we bent  
Down by the grave an' spelled his name an' went  
    Away.

## AN EDITOR.

Tired and sleepy, fingering his mail,  
    The editor sits in his big armchair,  
Close by his side, thimbling away,  
    His little wife sits mending a "tear,"  
Just such a one as, many a time,  
He'd mended himself when he hadn't a dime.



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Scoffed at and scorned by the cruel world,  
Sometimes he is driven almost to despair;  
But down Goodluck Street a loved one waits  
To smile away the clouds of care—  
Just such clouds, if he hadn't a wife,  
Would darken his path and shadow his life.

## LINES FOR AN ALBUM.

Lightly as the dew-drop lying  
On the leaf at peep of dawn,  
Gently as the snow-flake, flying,  
Kisses what it falls upon,  
Thus, oh Time, thus gently lay  
Your hand on her you should not wrong.  
Sweet girl, I would that every day  
Might pass with her like some sweet song,  
Whose dying numbers, as they roll,  
Lull to sleep the raptured soul.  
Misfortune, with your ugly mien,  
Never let your presence mar  
The soul whose radiant light, I ween,  
Is envied by the evening star;  
But, Heaven, grant her much below,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And, Hope, your every promise bring;  
Let joy from all its fountains flow;  
On every hand let blossoms spring,  
To cheer her path through life, and bless  
The very soul of loveliness.

### "MAMMY'S" DEATH.

Now, after eighty years have passed,  
That left her old head very hoar,  
Tardy Death has come at last  
And ferried old black mammy o'er.

Dear old mammy, good old slave,  
She watched my steps from childhood on,  
And till she sunk into the grave,  
My joys and sorrows were her own.

And though she now has joined the good,  
God's ransomed fold on Zion's hill,  
I'll bet, 'way over Jordon's flood,  
My erring feet she watches still.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

How often, since a man, I've thought  
Back o'er a careless time that's ended,  
When each good thing she'd get she brought  
And gave it to the child she tended.

The hand that gave unto the child,  
Whate'er it had the world did own it;  
A sister's rags her heart beguiled,  
And took her shawl or Sunday bonnet.

When war came rushing on pell-mell,  
And every darkey left his master,  
To those old mammy loved so well  
War only made her stick the faster.

And when the news would come and tell  
Of some big battle fought somewhere,  
She would not ask how many fell,  
But, "Were any of our people there?"

Work? None need order her or ask;  
With busy broom or garden hoe,  
She'd ply her self-appointed task,  
And all the time was on the go.

But now the broom stands in the corner,  
Old mammy wakes, to work no more,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Where God will place a crown upon her,  
'Way over there on Canaan's shore.

I'll not forget, I will be bound,  
My old black friend no longer here;  
Such worth as hers, wherever found,  
Commands remembrance and a tear.

## LUCAN AND MIRIAM.

'Tis said, for truth, that once upon a time  
Two lovers dwelt them in a happy clime.  
The two were paired like doves, were just as fond;  
They lived to love and had no thought beyond;  
Prayed to no heaven—their heaven was all below—  
And feared no fate but death's dissevering blow.  
'Twas ever theirs to wander at their will,  
At that calm season when on tower and hill  
The dying day's slow-waning splendor gleams,  
Or when the heavens were rich with stars, whose  
beams,  
The darkness piercing, lent their feeble light.  
But chiefly when the lady of the night  
In radiant splendor walked her heavenly path,  
O'erspread the slumb'rous landscape with a bath

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Of dusky light, delighted they to stray,  
And loiter, lovers-like, the hours away.

Thus dwelt they, happy, till, in evil hour,  
Hard-hearted death sought out their quiet bower,  
And bore the gentle Miriam, pretty dove,  
Forever from the arms of her true-love.

The story goes that Lucan (such the name  
Her lover bore) ere long to ruin came.  
The world, which erst was full of light and cheer,  
To him was dark now, very dark and drear.  
The hours which, so full of light and gladness,  
Flew by like golden-plumaged birds, in sadness  
Now dragged them on. Each loved, familiar haunt  
Which they would seek when on a lovers'-jaunt,  
The songs they used to sing, the little river  
They so much loved to visit, and seemed never  
To weary gazing on its peaceful flow,  
All, all combined to fill his heart with woe.  
Thus pressed with grief, beneath its weight of pain  
His mind at last, unequal to the strain,  
Gave way, and reason left its post forever,  
And sorrow with it, more to rack him never.  
Vague fancies now possessed his clouded mind.  
He'd hear his lost love calling on the wind;  
Or oft at eve, out in the golden west  
Her form he'd see, in heavenly raiment dressed,  
Poised on some pretty cloud; or when the day  
Flushed in the east he'd turn his face that way,  
And think, above the trees on th' crimson plain,  
He saw his darling coming back again.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

One night, though, when the moon superbly shone,  
And fancying that the pure soul that had flown  
In some such world as that, as bright and fair,  
Must be at rest, must wait his coming there,  
He longed to seek his lost; and gazing on  
The moon, where fancy told him she had gone,  
He yielded up his life, one victim more  
To join the host that love had slain before.  
Ah, better in the moon to dwell alone  
Than in this world whence your true-love has flown!

## JEANIE WI' THE SOFT BLUE EEN.

(In the Brogue of the Scotch.)

One morn when spring was at its brightest,  
An' flowers gaily bloomed about,  
An' ilka birdie's hairt was lightest,  
Wi' waefu' step I wandered out,

As aft I do when troubles bother,  
An' this harsh warld does sair annoy,  
To see gin, haply, I might gather  
Frae bird an' bloom a little joy.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

The low-voiced winds were gently blowing,  
I heard the turtle's far-aff croon,  
An' stopped to catch, frae the locust flowing,  
The red-winged blackbird's liquid tune.

Oh, sad maun be his hairt, an' weary,  
An' fu' o' wae his breast maun be,  
Wha canna join in nature's merry  
Round o' joy an' jollity!

But sae it was wi' me that morning;  
The clouds at dawn o' day I saw,  
When ower the east the sun was burning,  
A' took them wings an' flew awa;

But neither sun nor daylight's coming,  
Nor song o' bird nor sound o' bee,  
Nor flowers a' about me blooming,  
Could drive the cares awa' frae me.

Distracting troubles, mirk and many,  
Strolled wi' me then adoon the green,  
Till 'roond the hill I spied my Jeanie,  
My Jeanie wi' the soft blue een.

Her gowden tresses, loosely streaming,  
Were burning in the morning's flame,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

An' her sma', light feet in the wat grass gleam-  
ing  
As soft as the tread o' an angel came.

A bonnie tune my luve was humming,  
Wi' flowers her snaw-white apron teemed,  
An' the roses in her cheeks a-blooming  
As sweet as the blush o' a peri seemed.

But, oh, 'twas when her quick glance met me  
The rosy dawn o' beauty broke,  
An' ilka passion that beset me  
Frae its drowsy slumber woke.

An' thus I spoke unto my Jeanie:  
"The sweetest flowers I ever saw  
Are in this meadow blooming many,  
But ye're the sweetest o' them a'.

What brought ye out this hour sae early?  
I wot it may be truly said  
Ye cam' to shame the morning fairly,  
An' mak' ilka flower hang its head."

I took her pearly hand an' pressed it,  
An' a flower frae her dewy pack,



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

An' to my bosom I caressed it,  
Then thought just one sweet kiss I'd tak'—

“Na, na,” spoke up my timid Jeanie,  
“I canna now sae forward be,  
But wi' this bunch o' flowers bonnie  
I gie my hairt a', a' to thee.”

I thanked her for the flowers dearly;  
My hairt had gane somewhere awa',  
An' I pressed them to my bosom merely,  
An'—wanged her o' a kiss or twa.

An', oh may heaven's fiercest fury  
Owertak' me in some hour unseen,  
Gin I forget to luv my dearie,  
My Jeanie wi' the soft blue een.

## DISAPPOINTMENT.

Once when a child I saw a pretty bird  
High in a tree. Upon its burnished wing  
The sunlight flamed; and in me there was stirred  
A wish that I might catch the pretty thing.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

As if to satisfy my longing, quick,  
Down fluttering, near my side the songster drew:  
But when I put forth there my hand to pick  
My pretty birdie up, away it flew.

And later on in life I saw one day  
A hope come gleaming by, and in my breast  
It lodging took, and would not go away,  
But lingered there until I found no rest.

And there was born that day a bright ideal,  
A purpose; and the future then seemed fair;  
But, oh, a change did come! and what seemed real,  
And in my grasp, lo! vanished in the air.

Again, still later on in life, Love came.  
So blind is Love that for it beauty glows  
In splendor on a thistle just the same  
As flashes from the petals of a rose.

And there was one who came before me. Love,  
Foolish Love, did paint her perfect and most fair;  
But time that fades all colors soon did prove  
This bauble also fickle, light as air.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Now all about me seems a barren waste,  
A desert with no oasis in view;  
My hopes, my fair ideals, all erased  
From out my heart, which once their presence  
knew.

## AN ODE TO MUSIC.

I saw thee sitting in a shady nook,  
When on the bosom of the brook  
The morning's sunlight threw  
A dazzling sheen,  
And set the meadow green  
Aflame with sparkling drops of dew.

The flute in thy fair hands was passing rude,  
Of reed-stock fashioned it seemed to be,  
From the forest solitude,  
The abiding-place of sweetest harmony.

Rapt with the strains of thine own heaven-born skill,  
You sat and played at will.  
Eolus gave his whisperings soft,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And from the boughs aloft  
The liquid notes came wave on wave  
From the song-bird's happy heart,  
Child of the heaven-born art,  
To whom is given,  
Alone with Poesy, a glimpse of Heaven.

Fast from thy presence, heavenly Music, fled  
The ugly brood of Passion's baleful train,  
Each hanging in shame its hideous head,  
As never to fret my poor weak self again.

Again I saw thee, sitting now  
In Evening's dusky tent with harp in hand,  
A crown of russet leaves upon thy brow,  
By Autumn placed,  
And deftly interlaced,  
And again the master skill at thy command.

And as you touched the chords departing Day  
Did linger in the fading light,  
And in the eastern heavens grey  
Listened on-coming Night.

The trees  
Did whisper silence to the breeze  
That fanned their boughs that they might hear  
Thy melody, heavenly visitor.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

In olden days

A virgin mother once invoked thy power,  
To chant her joy and praise,

In that glad hour

When Heaven adorned her breast

With that bright Jewel which the world has blessed.

From Syrian skies angelic forms descended,

And, listening, rejoiced

As they attended

The matchless hymn you voiced.

Who is it would set bounds

And mark the limits of thy influence, power divine?

By voice or instrument you stir sweet sounds

To thrill the human heart, or souls that shine

In glory in the heaven.

To thee, sweet charmer, it is given

To tune the voices of the angelic throng

Within the courts of paradise,

Where praises to the King arise,

Or condescend

To earth and even lend

Thy influence to prompt the linnet's song,

Or the lullaby that charms

To rest the infant in its mother's arms.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Thy spirit, Music, would be ill content  
To dwell alone in voice, or reed, or stringed instrument.

Thy melody is in the storm-cloud's roar,  
As well as in the breezes soft at close  
Of the strenuous day that little more  
Than lightly mar the leaf's repose.

I hear it in the rain  
That beats against my window-pane,  
In the booming of the beetles when they come  
As the shades of evening lower,  
In the brown bee's hum  
At the noontide hour;

In the liquid monotone  
Of the water as it rolls  
O'er the brooklet's pebbly shoals.  
I hear it when I walk alone  
Out in the quiet shadows of the night,  
And contemplate the voiceless heavens. Space,  
Eternity—even these great silences of the universe  
That speak no language to the human race,  
And have no message to rehearse,  
To the poet's finer ear  
Are vocal with thy melody,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And there come sounds, subdued, but yet distinct and  
clear,  
Low murmurings that seem to be  
Music from the very depths of mystery.

Oh Music, matchless power divine!  
I ask this meed of thee—  
Enter thou this heart of mine,  
Fill it with thy melody,  
Fill it with thy beauty, too,  
Thy beauty and thy melody,  
That if at times I fain would sing,  
Let the song a message bring,  
A message of the good and true,  
That some poor soul, aweary of its pain,  
May listen and take heart again.

## GONE FOREVER.

No star a ray of light  
Shot athwart the windy night,  
For the hour was dark and there was no sky.  
A distant gun boomed now and then,  
An owl who-whoed, again, and again;  
The wind without and my heart did sigh  
The moment I saw the old year die,  
And the troop of might-have-beens pass by.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### HE CARES NA MAIR FOR ME.

(In the Brogue of the Scotch.)

I dinna know, nor do I care,  
How soon pale death may ca' for me;  
My laddie dotes on me na mair,  
An' I might as weel lie doon an' dee.

Yestreen he passed the time away  
Wi' the lass wha has the midnight ee,  
An' I know his hairt has gane astray,  
An' cares na mair, na mair for me.

Last night I greefu' took my bed,  
An' couldna do a thing but weep,  
An' sigh an' wish that I were dead,  
An' in the deep grave fast asleep.

However faithless he may prove,  
As he I canna cruel be;  
I'll bear for him my perfect luve,  
As lang as life is spared to me.



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### LOVE ALL-EMBRACING.

I well remember as a thoughtful child,  
While lying prone upon the autumn grass,  
A serious brown, touched by the matchless skill  
Of Winter's advance artists of the air,  
I often gazed out on the boundless, blue  
And trackless sea above me at a flock  
Of cranes, slow circling in the distance dim;  
One moment lost to sight, and then the next  
Their silvery wings, still higher circling, down  
Upon my eyes the sun's bright rays reflecting.  
I then would wonder in my boyish way  
Whence sprung their journey and where would it end.  
This lesson then was taught my youthful mind,  
More comforting as nearer draws the end,  
Amid conflicting creeds, than may be found  
Upon the written page, or from the lips  
Could ever fall: Beyond the heavens high  
A love exists as all-embracing as  
Is space itself, and as eternity  
As everlasting. And that love it is  
That guides the feathered wand'ers in their flight  
Unto a place in some fair sunny clime  
Prepared for them, where, when the sun goes down,  
And darkness well-nigh shuts the world from view,  
Low through the gathering twilight they can bend

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Their tired wings and settle on the ground,  
Rest and refreshment find, from danger free.

The same kind power that through the trackless  
fields

Of blue o'er-arching heaven guides the wild  
Fowl in its flight has also brought the child  
In safety thus far on life's weary road.  
And as the sunlight glancing from their wings  
Revealed, though dimly, to my sight the forms  
Of those strange wand'ers through the upper air,  
So likewise to my longing heart the bright  
And shining wings of faith, far from the earth  
High soaring in those fields, reflect down from  
A more resplendent Sun the light that gives  
Me glimpses of a fairer, brighter land.

And is it too presumptuous to dare hope  
The same kind hand that upholds in its flight,  
And guides the wild fowl on its toilsome way,  
Will also bring at last my weary feet  
To some bright haven in a better land,  
When twilight falls and ended is the day?

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### HIS FAITHFUL DOG.

Tracing the tracks of the riderless horse,  
He searched for the missing man,  
'Long the swamp-path's wild and lonely course  
That through the forest ran.

The day was dark and the big rain-drops  
Began to patter free,  
The wind through the lofty cypress tops  
Moaned mournfully.

What sees he now in the dark wildwood  
That makes him stop and stare?  
He is tracing now some clots of blood  
Scattered here and there.

He follows the trail through the timber gray,  
Till, aside from yonder log,  
A low growl comes. He looks that way,  
And sees a faithful dog.

---

A man was murdered out in the swamps in one of the lower counties. His horse having come home with bridle and saddle on, a party rode off in search of the man. Following the horse's tracks through the woods the rider came upon the dead body of the man and a dog lying beside it.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

There was the man, forever mute,  
In the bloody leaves impressed,  
And lying there was the faithful brute  
Across his master's breast.

The noble animal all night lay  
By the master he loved so well,  
And bayed the beasts of the forest away,  
A faithful sentinel.

### A FATHER'S LULLABY TO HIS IN- VALID CHILD.

(In the Brogue of the Scotch.)

Daddie's little bairnie sweet,  
Hae mony thousan' charms,  
Tho' frail o' body, weak an' pale,  
Here faulded in his arms.—

Why, what is bairnie smilin' at,  
Tho' closed her little een?  
Sees angel bodies hov'ring near  
In heavenly raiment sheen.\*

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Oh, angels, dinna linger lang,  
Your presence seems to say  
The gude, kind Ane wha gied mysweet  
Maun tak' her soon away.

My tiny flower unfaulded first  
In the garden o' the blest,  
They sent the wee thing doon to earth  
To adorn its mither's breast.

But like the dew that fades awa'  
When morn glints† ower the green,  
My precious bairnie soon in death  
Maun close her little een,

Then daddie's days will a' be dark,  
Nae little bairn to keep,  
An' cuddle in his gude, strong arms  
Until she gaes to sleep.

\*bright. †peeps.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### FOR JULIA FRANK McGUIRE.

On Her Thirteenth Birthday, May 10, 1899.

In the joyous month of May,  
When flowers were blooming gay,  
And smiling nature wore a gaudy dress,  
Of green and blossoming white,  
And pink and violet bright,  
Our little daughter came our home to bless.

Fine little girl of ours,  
Born in the month of flowers,  
Oh, may she always just as pure be found  
As the sweet flowers, and be  
From sin and stain as free.—  
With deeds of kindness may her life abound.

Then, when her days are done,  
Her life's setting sun  
Will go down in a bright and cloudless west,  
And one eternal May,  
With flowers blooming gay  
Will wait her in that bright home of the blest.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### MARK.

He was a dog (four-legged one),  
As good as death e'er seized upon.  
His virtues sparkled just as bright  
As the lamps that hang in the sky at night,  
And in him all were nicely set,  
Like jewels in a coronet.

Not strong like others of his race,  
He started on life's rugged chase,  
And easy 'twas for the reaper grim  
To follow up and o'ertake him.

Like a tree that springs from rarest root,  
And a little while bears choicest fruit,  
Till the axman comes with cruel blow,  
And soon prostrate it lieth low;  
Or like the glow at set of sun,  
A short time pleases, then is done,  
So in his youthful prime and pride  
The noble fellow left my side—  
So young in years, mature in worth,  
Too good a creature long for earth.

In field, when hunting, he was there  
As good as ever scented air,  
Or signalled when the game was round,  
Or fetched it in when brought to ground.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

I little thought, when first I knew,  
Poor Mark, disease had seized on you,  
So soon I'd make your dying bed,  
So soon, so soon, would see you dead.

They told me, as they stood about,  
You might be mad,—I should look out.  
I would not this suspicion share,  
But nursed you with the tenderest care,  
And rubbed your face, and softly spread  
A pillow for your restless head,  
And watched you through the livelong day,  
And saw your life slow ebb away.

And as I sat and fanned the flies  
From your noble face and death-dimmed eyes,  
And saw your life-thread there unrolled  
And drawn away like a skein of gold,  
I sighed and said to myself: "Some place  
May there not be 'way out in space  
Where worth like this meets its reward  
And rest succeeds this suffering hard,  
And dogs like Mark, in merry round,  
Enjoy a happier hunting-ground?"

Your biped master, blind like you,  
Can not the curtained future view,  
And in his weakness fancies he  
Would rest content if his could be  
A heaven where we cross some streams,  
And fences, hollows, and where gleams  
The autumn sunlight, and where steals  
The chittering quail o'er stubble-fields,



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And there with you, in endless round,  
Range over such a hunting ground.

Forgetting sometimes he is dead,  
I hear his bark or rustling tread,  
Or through the ways of fancy steals  
The thought I hear him at my heels.  
But away these fancies soon are driven,  
Like gold-fringed clouds by winds at even,  
And my thoughts again are hovering round  
Where I heaped o'er him a little mound.

## TWILIGHT.

This is the time when "whip-poor-will"  
Is faintly heard borne from afar,  
The season when the lightning-bug  
A moment flashes like a star.

Oh, look you there, the western sky  
Is now in crimson beauty drest!  
Too soon dark Night will spread a shroud  
Over the day dead in the west.

Slow the shades are westward creeping,  
Darker grows the upland green;

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Out on the hill young lovers, strolling,  
Hand-in-hand, may now be seen.

While sleep the winds on prairies broad,  
And the red moon routes the eastern gloom,  
How sweet the music from the marsh  
Doth on my raptured spirit come!

Adieu, fair day, now fading fast!  
A pleasant one you've been to me;  
Oh, may the night that takes your place  
As gentle and as pleasant be!

## WINTER AND SPRING.

Whither, whilst falls the snow,  
And early birds that came refuse to sing  
Against the biting norland winds that blow,  
Art thou, sweet Spring?

Why, here am I!  
Yestreen, when gray old Winter tried to squeeze me,  
To cloudlands near the sun I thought I'd fly,  
Lest he might freeze me.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### NIECENE.

I mourn for the fair one gone to sleep,  
Niecene, Niecene. She lieth by  
The willow tree where the light  
winds sigh  
And whisper to me to come and weep.

To weep for the lady fair in whom  
All womanly virtues shone as bright  
As the stars in heaven that come at  
night  
To look in pity upon her tomb.

No music is there in the roundelay  
The wild bird sings in yonder tree;  
Out of the world, it seems to me,  
Music with Niecene went away.

And void is the world of the beauty it  
gave,  
For when in a snow-white gown they  
dressed  
The fair Niecene and laid her to rest  
They buried beauty in the selfsame  
grave.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### OLD YEAR DEAD.

The old year's gone  
And out of sight:  
Death, prowling 'round  
At dead of night,  
Bore him  
Away.

A snowy shroud  
Death raised o'erhead  
And flapped in the cold  
Night wind, and spread  
It o'er him,  
They say.

Goodbye, goodbye,  
Goodbye, old year!  
Above your grave  
I'll drop a tear  
And sigh,  
I will,

To think how soon  
I, too, must go,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And in a bed  
    Beneath the snow  
        Will lie  
        So still.

He weeps for you,  
    Old year, whose fate,  
Or death come soon  
    Or tarry late,  
        Must be,  
        I know,

To feel the sting  
    Of the chilly breath  
Of the cold, cold world,  
    Till 'long with death,  
        Like thee  
        I go.

Who'll weep for me,  
    Old year, as I  
Now weep for you,  
    When low I lie  
        Beneath  
        A stone?

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Ah, one there is  
Will softly tread  
The turf above  
My lowly bed,  
And sigh for me,  
And cry for me,  
Till her last breath  
Is gone.

### MY ANNIE.

They say the queenly rose  
Of all the flowers many,  
Is the fairest one that blooms—  
Still fairer is my Annie.

The wanton little brooklet  
That laughs along its way  
As my artless little Annie  
Is not half so gay.

As the dew-drop on the leaf  
Reflects the morning's beams,  
So from the eyes of Annie  
Heavenly beauty gleams.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Now, since my darling of all fair ones  
The paragon doth prove,  
Who can wonder that she's empress  
Of my bosom's world of love?

## LOVE SORROWING.

Whither, whither, spirit pale,  
Hast thou taken him away?  
Hither, hither, do not fail  
Soon to come for me, I pray.

What of life is left, for me  
Longer here on earth to dwell,  
Since I can no longer be  
Near the one I loved so well?

Gone is light from out my life,  
Night has swallowed up the day;  
Why prolong the bitter strife,  
Heart of mine, with sorrow, pray?

Sing no more, you birdies there,  
Flitting light from bough to bough,  
Sorrow says I must not care  
Any more for pleasure now.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Bloom no more throughout the year,  
Flowers, in the bright sunshine,  
Sorrow says you must not cheer  
Any more this heart of mine.

## IN THE CITY.

Not in forest dark, primeval,  
Where the hunter, wild and rude,  
Scorning noisy walks and civil,  
Trusts his rifle for his food;

Not where rugged cliff, depending,  
Darkens with its savage frown  
The scene below, itself defending  
By the terror it sends down;

Not out on the barren prairie,  
Where the howling coyotes roam,  
And the trav'ler's way is weary,  
Would my spirit scorn a home;



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

But where soulless Business ever  
Hums her harsh, discordant strain,  
Calm contentment, gracious giver  
Of life's sweets, I court in vain.

Were I doomed my days to languish  
'Neath the city's cheerless sky,  
What were life but bitter anguish  
And a wish, ah! soon to die!

Greedy souls who seek to treasure  
Up of wealth a glittering store,  
Find, perhaps, a fancied pleasure  
Mid the struggling city's roar;

But like rural heavens brighter,  
And like woodland songs more  
sweet,  
So our rustic hearts are lighter,  
And our pleasure's more complete.

Now, while chill October weather  
Goldens every field and wood,  
I would stroll some well-known  
heather,  
Or some forest solitude.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

Speed, oh time! I loathe to tarry  
Where at ease I can not rest;  
Haste the day that will me carry  
To my home out in the west.

## THIRTY YEARS AGO.

I took a trip to Jackson, Jim,  
Back in old Girardeau,  
Where you and I were reckless blades,  
Some thirty years ago.

I sauntered down the sidewalk, Jim,  
And halted at the door  
Of one of those booze dens, you know,  
As I oft had done before.

The one who handed out the drinks  
Was not the chap we knew,  
Who used to smile when we'd drop in  
'Way back in 'eighty-two.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

The web he wove for you and me  
About himself he wound,  
And when I asked, they told me he  
Was planted in the ground.

And few were left of that old crowd,  
Whose cash he gathered in—  
The rest had glided out and down  
The toboggan-slide of sin.

But round about the door, old friend,  
I saw a younger brood,  
And lined up at the counter, too,  
Where once their fathers stood.

Neglected women, worn and wan,  
With broken hearts, yet true,  
Still stand and watch and wait at  
night,  
Just as they used to do.

And anxious, care-worn mothers pray  
Their wayward boys may be  
Saved from the tempter's snare, as  
ours  
Oft prayed for you and me,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

I stood and watched the people, Jim,  
As they used to in old days,  
Both old and young come trooping in  
From many walks and ways.

But few remained of our old class,  
The others were all gone,  
Were carted off as rubbish, Jim,  
Many a broken demijohn.

I thought me of the graveyard, Jim,  
And wandered down that way,  
And stood beside the grave of one  
I loved in the olden day,

Who used to watch and wait for me  
At the door or at the gate,  
And pray for me while baby slept,  
When I often stayed out late.

Now we are old, and time will soon  
Foot up our big mistake—  
A few more useless days, and then  
The silver cord will break.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### A COUNTRY BURIAL.

The sun comes up and brings a cheerful day,  
The time is in the summer month of June.  
From the busy world the scene lies quite away,  
Where beauties blend like harp-strings all in tune.

The country dwelling stands upon a hill,  
A few thin-leaved old locust trees among,  
And through the lowland nigh a sparkling rill  
Gayly runs its winding course along.

The neighboring folks are gathering to the cot,  
From every way, with pace sedate and slow,  
Good men, goodwives, old folks and young. I wot  
It must be death has laid somebody low.

Yes, death a cruel wound has dealt that home,  
And fourscore years are ready for the grave;  
At last the welcome call from Heaven has come  
Unto the good, the patient and the brave.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

A gentleman is dead, forsooth the pride  
Of the little world wherein his life was led,  
A man but little known 'mong men, but wide  
In a world somewhere beyond his glory spread.

The older folks, companions of the dead,  
Who long with him had walked in virtue's way,  
Their children, schooled in duty's paths to tread,  
All here had come their last respects to pay.

Now, slowly moving, see the cortege go,  
Plain people, all, in unaffected guise,  
Bearing the form of him they gladly know  
Rejoices in a home beyond the skies.

A woodland pasture lies not far ahead,  
And there, marked by a few enclosures rude,  
O'er which a weeping-willow's branches spread,  
The family graveyard lies in solitude.

And there the corpse arrives, and all stand 'round  
To look once more upon the peaceful face,  
Expressive of the faith that did abound,  
E'en until life had run its lengthy race.

With feeble step a gray-haired man appears,  
His face revealing hope as bright as day,

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And joy, which wets perforce the eyes with tears,  
And with a trembling voice begins to pray.

His eyes to heaven the holy man doth raise,  
And asks the Lord the dear bereft to take,  
And never let them walk in sinful ways,  
Where woes unnumbered crowd in pleasure's wake.

For plainly we are taught in that good book,  
'Tis virtue brings us peace, contentment brings,  
And hope, which bids the faithful Christian look  
Beyond this world of failing, fleeting things.

And next, while all with strict attention hark,  
The reverend father from the Bible reads,  
How many are the paths of sin, and dark,  
How careful each should be wherein he treads.

His duty done, the old man slow retires,  
The sacred trust unto the grave is given,  
And oh, how many are the heartfelt prayers,  
The dear bereft may meet their lost in Heaven.

The grave anon is filled, and homeward now  
The sorrowing crowd betake their various ways,  
All talking how the old man lived, and how  
He was beloved, and always met with praise.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

But who is it that now her body throws  
Upon the grave? His old goodwife is she;  
These many years she's shared his joys and woes,  
And resting with him now she longs to be.

O glorious scene, where joy and sorrow blend!  
When looked upon what is it starts the tear  
But beauty seen, we longing to ascend  
To Heaven, where all beauty doth appear?

When death has singled out some haughty lord,  
Whose soul no doubt has seen its brightest days,  
Mark with what show the poor remains are stored,  
And see how men upon him shower praise.

Alas for him who seeks for fame alone,  
And shapes his acts to gain the rabble's nod!  
Oh, when to all the world will it be known  
It is no flowery road leads up to God?

The paths of virtue go an uphill way,  
Their promised joys far off we dimly see,  
And onward press; but if we step astray,  
And fall—mark, then, with what facility.

What boots it if your power be that of kings,  
Your glory such a Caesar well might vie,



## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

And what if praises flow from a thousand springs,  
If after all you can not Christians die?

You over-wise, who preach and proudly boast  
Of faith as firm as Plymouth Rock, ye famed  
For weighty thought, but for religion most,  
The country cotter can make you ashamed.

## ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF A BOY COMPANION.

The sun came up and brought a lovely day,  
The woods and fields their autumn beauty wore,  
And everything so bright that one would say  
There never was a fairer day before.

The rustic farmer sang his morning song  
As trod he fieldward to his daily work;  
The current of affairs flowed smooth along,  
And none thought midst the scene that harm could  
lurk.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

But evil fates, to ply their deadly arts,  
And work distress and ruin, leap upon  
Us in the brightest moments of our hearts,  
As to wait its prey the serpent seeks the sun.

So with the bright-hoped youth of whom I write,  
Whose heart in unison with nature beat,  
Upon this lovely day, and bounded light  
As the hopes that to him danced with fairy feet.

We each have marked some time a gay, bright flower  
Spring up, rejoicing in its youthful bloom,  
And in one unexpected, evil hour  
Its life yield to the blasting touch of doom.

But little further he would travel on,  
Thought he, poor boy, and then return once more;  
And so we all thought he would not be gone  
But few weeks yet, perhaps some three or four.

And oh! he did return—relentless, cruel fate,—  
But not in joy to greet his friends and kin,  
All in a mangled, bleeding, dying state,  
To sleep, too soon, the dread, dark grave within.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### THE DYING TRAPPER TO HIS DOG.

Come here, old doggie, 'n' listen what I say;  
Creep close up, for my voice is weak to-day.  
Come right up here and stand beside the bed  
So I can put my hand upon your head  
And talk to Bulger some before I die—  
Cheer up, old doggie, cheer up, don't you cry.

I hear a voice outdoors a-calling me;  
It's not the voice of man, for now I see  
You do not hear it, else how quick you'd bound  
Away to see who 'tis that's prowling round.  
It's God who calls me now—I hear Him plain.—

“Take not the rifle from its rack again;  
The shot-pouch and the powder-horn,” He says,  
“Must hang just where they are rest of their days.”

So good-bye, for I'm going soon, but you  
Must stay behind, you can not go 'long too.  
I know you want to follow, just the same  
As when we go out on a hunt for game.  
God will take care of Bulger, for you see  
He's a friend to you same as He is to me.  
I'm dying, Bulger,—but don't grieve that way;  
You'll find a place where they will let you stay.  
Of course you'll miss your master, 'n' he'll miss you  
In that strange country he is going to.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

But sometime, Bulger, your days, too, will end,  
Then you will track me up, my dear old friend,  
And find me somewhere in another shanty,  
Where timber's thick and where the game is plenty.

## ON A TRANSIT OF VENUS.

That planet you see, away up there,  
Venus, the bright and beautiful,  
Watched by thousands everywhere,  
Her veil of feathery clouds did pull  
Over her face so very fair,  
And we saw not the transit, scene so rare,  
And our cup of grief was surely full.

But why should we grieve because denied  
A glance at a single star that beams  
Beyond the moon, on the other side  
Of the mystic, mythical realm of dreams  
While here at home, in their beauty's pride,  
Along our streets, on every side,  
Many and many a Venus gleams?

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### MOTHER AND CHILD.

"I wish three weeks would hurry by,"  
Thus spoke a mother, sighing,  
While sitting by the little bed  
Where her sick child was lying.

"For about that time, the doctor says,  
My baby 'll be well again."  
And hope beamed brightly from her  
eyes,  
And she was happy then.

One, two, three the days passed by,  
Each seeming to get longer,  
As patiently she watched and nursed  
The child that grew no stronger.

And then there came a heavy shade  
That gathered all about  
The mother's face until it made  
The lamp of hope go out.

The three weeks passed quite soon,  
but she  
Her babe no more caresses,—  
The little form the good, kind earth  
Close to its bosom presses.

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

### ROLL THE STONE AWAY.

"Brother Jones, I often think  
That things are out of joint,  
But where the fault lies I confess  
I'm not prepared to point.

"All 'roundabout, on lower ground  
Than we can deign to stand,  
Sinners vile outside the church  
Infest our blessed land.

"In rags and patches, filth and dirt,  
Too foul for us to touch,  
Unless we would pollute and stain  
Society too much.

"So dead in sin, like Lazarus,  
Whom Christ new vigor gave,  
Some nineteen hundred years ago,  
They stink within the grave.

"What's to be done I cannot see;  
It doth conclusive seem  
To save the elect, destroy the herd  
Is part of Heaven's scheme."

## LITTLE BOOK OF VERSES.

So spoke good Deacon Smith, and  
Jones

Replied, and thus he said:

"These creatures are but hungry souls  
And need but to be fed.

"Has Christ not said, whoever will  
May free himself from sin,  
Put on new faith, renew his life,  
And Heaven enter in?

"Though dead in sin, as in the grave  
Was Lazarus of old,  
Touched by His grace, renewed by  
faith,  
They are numbered in the fold.

"Oh, let the Church but once its proud  
Toploftiness discard,  
Descend and give the helping hand,  
And the task will not be hard.

"As at the grave the Savior bade  
The dead new life begin,  
So can the Church these sinners raise  
From the depth and death of sin.

"The stone that lies before the grave  
Is pride of wealth and worth:  
Roll this stone away, and then  
Lazarus will come forth."





## INDEX.

A Grave .....	1
The Birth of Christ .....	2
The Broken Heart .....	4
A Summer Twilight .....	6
Santa Claus .....	8
No Distant Day .....	9
The Holy Spirit .....	11
Stanzas .....	13
Lines to a Toad .....	15
On the Death of a Little Child.....	16
To a Mocking-Bird .....	17
Sonnet .....	19
A Childhood Idyl .....	20
Souter Johnny's Death .....	22
One Who Did Not Come .....	24
To ——— .....	28
An Ode to Death .....	29
To My Friend, Dr. H. Hildreth .....	33
Sylph .....	34
For an Album .....	36
Ode to the Month of May .....	38

Spring .....	39
To a Wood Wren .....	40
Eugene Field .....	42
Flowers .....	44
Lines to a Bird .....	45
Dick .....	46
Ode to the East Wind .....	47
To a Little Chicken Found Out in the Cold.....	51
To a Little Child .....	53
Pity .....	54
Brother Ben .....	55
The Mover Girl .....	57
On Learning of the Marriage of an Old Sweet- heart .....	59
The Vagabonds .....	60
Margery .....	64
In the Garden .....	65
A Lullaby .....	66
When I Am Gone .....	68
Evening Before the First Frost .....	73
Cupid and the Serpent .....	75
Walk With Thy Child .....	77
Connie's Grave .....	78
Little Connie .....	79
Old Blaze .....	81
Ode to a Honey Bee .....	83
Lines .....	85
Bunny Dead .....	86
An Editor .....	88
Lines For an Album .....	89
"Mammy's" Death .....	90
Lucan and Miriam .....	92
Jeannie Wi' the Soft Blue Een .....	94

Disappointment .....	97
An Ode to Music .....	99
Gone Forever .....	103
He Cares Na Mair for Me .....	104
Love All-Embracing .....	105
His Faithful Dog .....	107
A Father's Lullaby to His Invalid Child .....	108
For Julia Frank McGuire .....	110
Mark .....	111
Twilight .....	113
Niece .....	115
Old Year Dead .....	116
My Annie .....	118
Love Sorrowing .....	119
In the City .....	120
Thirty Years Ago .....	122
A Country Burial .....	125
Accidental Death of a Boy Companion .....	129
The Dying Trapper to His Dog .....	131
A Transit of Venus .....	132
Mother and Child .....	133
Roll the Stone Away .....	134









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